721 Monday [or Thursday] which is always favorable to us, *bwağbet aṯ-ṯnên*."

They answer: "O Allâh, may success be our lot! May he grant us luck! *Já-lláh maksûm ḫejr alláh ja'ṭi as-sa'ad*."

705 492 Then they begin to hunt for good camel bags, flour, water bags, and barley for the horses. He who means to go on his mare only seeks someone to carry his food supplies, *zammâl*. If he finds a camel rider who will do him that service, *jezmalek*, he loads his supplies on the camel and himself rides in the saddle, while the owner sits behind. The mare runs beside the camel to which she is tied. But every owner of a mare generally has a camel of his own and is accompanied either by his slave or a younger relative. Those who ride on camels are always in the majority, and for long raids in the hot season none but she-camels are used. Horses are ridden mainly on short raids, undertaken in the time of *rabî'*. Nor can all the horses in camp be taken out—at least half must be left at home in order to repel a possible hostile attack. All the horses are shod before making a raid, and a few extra horseshoes taken to meet emergencies, *jetanaṣṣel ḥdâḥa*. They also sew up, generally with horsehair, the vaginas, *jeṣabberûn al-faras*, of mares big with young, especially the older ones, in order to prevent miscarriage.

721 701 Old men and small boys must not go on a raid. They are left at home to guard the camp. However, a boy of twelve is old enough to join the raiders and may properly do so, especially in the *rabî'* season when neither thirst nor hunger threatens. In the hot months mainly men between 16 and 40 take part. They do not like to be accompanied by a young husband, *'arrîs* (sic), in the first year of his married life. This time, called *krûn al-'ars*, is not very favorable to important ventures, therefore it is better that the young husband should stay at home. No custom forbids men to have intercourse with their wives immediately before starting out, nor is it necessary that they should put on freshly washed clothes. Everybody usually leaves in the clothes he wears at the moment.

[585 777] [834] [714]

721 The preparations for a raid take a considerable time. However, nobody ever knows definitely against which tribe he is going, for the simple reason that the Rwala always have several enemies at once. Only the most intimate friends of the commander-in-chief know his objective, while the rest of the camp is kept guessing. This secret it is necessary to

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726* 539* from a tent other than his master's; also of a man who helps himself from a full platter set before others, without being invited. *Ṛarra* is a thing of value which some man finds and keeps. 13. Eben Ǧrajjed is a chief of the Beni ʿAṭijje. *Ṣafḥa* is the general name of the territory where the Ḥwêṭât, Beni ʿAṭijje, and Šarârât like to camp, because it slopes both east and west. *Ṯwa*ʾ: the dead, buried. 14. Htejm is the term for the despised clans and tribes, thus also the Šarârât, of whom [714] the poet is thinking. 15. *Šihb* means attacking riders. Before the attack they divest themselves of their mantles and caftans, if they have any, entrust them to their returning comrades, *rudd*, and are clothed only in their dirty gray, *šihb*, shirts. 16. Al-ʿAlja, the name given by the Rwala to their white camel herds. *Medâlih* or *marâkiz*, swift, flashing, terms applied to the Rwala owing to their mode of delivering attacks in quick succession with the suddenness of lightning. Whenever the sky is enveloped in black clouds, a wind storm rises in the desert, carrying and driving dust, fine sand, and dry plants before it and overturning all tents the pegs and ropes [721 of which are not tight. 18. Eben Hazzâʿ — i. e. an-Nûri, the 577] commander of the Rwala — did not commit treason when he attacked the enemy. His face is without blemish, that is white. *Neḳaʿ* signifies integrity, honesty, which both parties to a peace treaty have to maintain. The party declaring war, returns the integrity, *neḳaʿ*, to the other party. He who attacks another without a declaration of war fails to return the *neḳaʿ* to the attacked party, commits treason, and blackens his honesty, his face. 19. *Nišâma* are gay youths, young heroes; *neśmijje*: a gay beauty, a heroine. *ʿAǧǧat* is used alike for a violent passion, for rising dust, and for an approaching throng of raiders. Ḥmâr maintained that *ṣabâha* meant "her youth," but ʿAwde pronounced it "*sabâha*." According to Ḥmâr the poet speaks of a gay beauty in whose veins was beating the blood of youth demanding its rights from another man, while ʿAwde maintained that the poet expresses his admiration for a beauty who seeks to save, either by hiding or by flight, the camels burdened with household goods, against which a raiding troop, *sabâha*, was advancing, *ʿaǧǧat*. 22. *Ḥâlât* is an area covered with basalt and lava, where neither horse nor rider can move except by a few narrow paths. The Rwala drove the defeated enemy as far as the borders of such an area. The defeated mourned, the victors sang.